THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) No Bal Bhavan has so far been established in States through funding under the Plan Scheme of "National Bal Bhavan". However, State Governments, Local Bodies, NGOs etc. have themselves established 73 Bal Bhavans which have been granted affiliation by the National Bal Bhavan.

(c) and (d) No Expert Committee has been appointed to evaluate the functioning of State Bal Bhavans. However, a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri P.K. Kaul, former Cabinet Secretary, was constituted in July, 2002, to review the working of the National Bal Bhavan. This Committee submitted its Report in December, 2002.

(e) During the year 2003-2004, Central Government sanctioned Plan Grant amounting to Rs. 1,86,00,000/- and accorded permission for carry forward of unspent balance of Rs. 2,14,20,451/- from the previous year, to National Bal Bhavan, Delhi, against which a sum of Rs. 3,98,22,767/- was utilized by it.

Kannada as a Classical Language

*98. SHRI K.B. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any delegation from Karnataka submitted a Memorandum seeking classical language status for Kannada language;

(b) if so, the date of its submission; and

(c) the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 22nd September, 2004.

(c) It is under examination.

Schemes for poverty alleviation

†*99. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT: Will the Minister of URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government are taking to empower the poor for reducing poverty;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.